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ART. IV.—*Kay's Travels in Caffraria.*

Travels and Researches in Caffraria ; describing the Character, Customs, and Moral Condition of the Tribes inhabiting that Portion of Southern Africa, &c. New York. 1834.

THIS book, which was published last year in London, is the production of the Rev. Stephen Kay, a missionary of the Wesleyan Methodist Society, who has been engaged some eleven years, as he expresses himself in his Introduction, 'in the service of the perishing progeny of Ham,' and of Christian missions generally, and has, of course, enjoyed very considerable opportunities of personal observation in regard to the country and people which he has here undertaken to describe. We deem it but justice to him, to say,—previously to any examination of the interesting details of his volume,—that he has manifestly entered upon the composition of it, not as a book-maker, but conscientiously ; and although some portions of it are not very clearly arranged, and others are borrowed literally, and pretty liberally too, from preceding travellers in the same regions, the whole collation constitutes, nevertheless, what we may safely pronounce the most accurate, complete and valuable account of the Caffers, which has yet been given to the world. There is also a good deal of information in it regarding the present condition of the English settlement in the Colony of the Cape, the neighboring Hottentots and other tribes, the progress of civilization and Christianity among these people, and other incidental subjects of no little interest. We propose, in the following pages, to present our readers with a brief view of the whole ground of the Researches, derived as well from all the previous authorities on the subject, which have come to our notice, as from the last of the series, which lies before us.

There has been heretofore a great want of definiteness in the accounts furnished us of the people comprehended under the title of *Caffers*. The application of this title has been quite as variable as its orthography, and frequently as irrelevant as its original meaning,—the word being the Arabic for

liar or *infidel*, and first employed by certain more northerly African nations, with whom the Europeans were earlier acquainted, to designate all the South-eastern tribes who had not embraced the Mohammedan faith. We do not wonder much, under these circumstances, that some of the latter are, as Lichtenstein states in his travels, 'offended at being called Caffers.' Had they been thus generically denominated thieves, instead of liars, certain facts, which we shall have occasion to notice, would seem to give a color of pertinency to the designation.

It is remarkable that the word *Hottentot*, as Barrow has pointed out, is of unknown origin. The name, in use among that people themselves, is *Quaiquae*. We are not aware that the Caffers recognise any such generic appellation, or rather, we should say, that any occasion exists for such appellation: for in fact the compliment conveyed, as above stated, in the term used by the northerly nations, has been since applied by Europeans, with an altogether arbitrary looseness of liberality, to combinations of nations, as various as those of the kaleidoscope. Mr. Kay, in the use of the term, apparently intends to designate those tribes which '*lie along the eastern coast from the colonial boundary, in 33 degrees south latitude, northwards.*' This description is not particularly definite, but the sketches are actually in a great measure confined to three tribes, the Amaxosæ, Amatembu, and Amaponedæ, and to these our remarks will chiefly have reference. They occupy the country from the eastern frontier of the English colony to Port Natal.

The Caffers, then,—since convenience, rather than courtesy, must model our phraseology in this instance,—are admitted by most travellers, notwithstanding their name, to be a well-formed, decent-featured, and comely people. Their countenances are more European than African, although their hair is woolly and their color dark brown. From their physical traits, Barrow has drawn the inference of an Arabic origin for them. He says, they have not the smallest resemblance to the negroes in either conformation or features, and that they differ from the Arab superficially in nothing but a deeper shade of complexion; and this theory is somewhat plausibly confirmed, in the view of this writer by their nomadic habits, their hospitality, the shape of their habitations, and especially

their scrupulous observance of the rite of circumcision. Pringle also supports this opinion, and so does Mr. Kay ; and they both adduce additional facts in apparent confirmation of it. There is nothing incredible, or even improbable, in the theory itself, especially since it is well known that the wandering Bedouins have penetrated into almost every section of the continent, and have even planted themselves on the South African islands. However, genealogies, like etymologies, are not always to be relied on. The Aborigines of this country, commonly so called, have been derived, as every body is aware, from nearly all the civilized nations, ancient and modern, on the face of the earth. Books have been written exclusively to prove their descent from the Israelites ; the Tartars of Northern Asia, the Chinese, Icelanders, Carthaginians, have severally been charged with the ancestral relation ; even the Welsh have not escaped ; and finally, it is only three years since it was proved to the satisfaction of some persons, that the Moors must inevitably take the responsibility, from the alleged circumstance, that a sailor of that nation, who met with a Choctaw Indian at Natchez, was able to hold conversation with him without the aid of an interpreter ! So much for genealogies.

The apparel of the Caffers is made wholly of the skins of beasts, excepting those cases only, which may be noticed hereafter, where the customs of their civilized neighbors have been introduced among them. These changes have occurred at and about the missionary stations, and may generally be considered,—taking into view the attachment which all barbarians (as well as some partly civilized people) feel for old customs,—as a tolerably accurate indication of the more important intellectual and moral advances, to which they commonly correspond.

The imitative propensity, as well as the communicative, it is worth noting, are universally traits in the African character,—in which, by the way, they differ diametrically from our Indians,—and such as may be pronounced of the first interest, in reference to the competency and tendency of their possessors to a state of civilization. This social disposition is indeed often carried to an extent which most travellers, if not missionaries, would call meddlesome and troublesome, not to say ridiculous. The Landers, we well remember, were not a little amused by a native who, after indulging his curiosity

in a pretty free examination of their premises, baggage and all, not meeting with any thing which suited his taste better for a hat, finally encircled his cranium with the tin top of a jelly-pot, which was marked in large letters 'concentrated gravy,' and in that guise grinningly strutted about the encampment, with all the dandy dignity of a Bond-street beau. Mr. Kay somewhere remarks, that the Caffer lady, in what may be called the chrysalis stage of transmutation, is not unfrequently seen promenading, in the vicinity of the mission-houses, with an English petticoat suspended from the neck instead of the waist, while the gentleman in attendance makes himself nearly as conspicuous, by sporting for a gala dress a pair of leather trowsers, surmounted by a check shirt. So they can get on any thing civilized, and keep it on, by hook or crook, it matters little of what material the decorations may be made, or in what order they are fastened to the frame of the wearers. Our natives have been much slower to imitate, and still more awkward also in the process. Witness the tradition transmitted by the Dutch party who first landed on Manhattoes. They made a donation of stockings and axes,—two valuable articles,—to the chiefs of the party which entertained them; and when the visit was repeated the next season, it was ascertained that the stockings had been converted into tobacco-pouches, while the axes were generally used for bosom-pins. In regard to the taste of the Caffers in matters of dress, we shall add only, that ornaments of various kinds are extensively worn. These consist chiefly of beads, bones, feathers, and metallic bracelets, some thirty of the latter being occasionally seen on the arms of a great man, that is, a stout man; to all which the same dignified class often append, like the chiefs of the Northern African tribes, the elegant embellishment of a cow's tail, swung from the knee.

The wealth of the Caffers consists of their herds and flocks, and their occupation, of the care of them;—there being probably no barbarous nation in the world, who are so systematically and scientifically devoted to grazing. 'The Caffer,' says Mr. Kay, 'is never so happy, as when engaged in something calculated to increase the numbers or improve the appearance of his cattle.' Such is his perfect acquaintance with his herd, that one of a thousand would be immediately missed; and he observes even the turn of the horns, or the slightest spots on the hide, so minutely, as to identify every individual almost infalli-

bly after seeing them two or three times. Our traveller mentions an instance in which two oxen had been stolen from the mission-fold by marauders, when, although the path leading to it had been trampled upon by the whole herd, the track of the animals driven off was at once discovered by the neighboring natives, and diligently followed up by a party of them,—though rendered by the thieves as circuitous as possible,—until they came upon the very kraal in which the lost property had been concealed. These cattle-folds are invariably constructed in every hamlet,—generally on the sunny side of a hill,—and are made of circular hedges, so compact as to protect the herd in winter from the cold in some measure, as well as from the wild animals which infest the country.

It is a curious illustration of the dignity which the grazing profession possesses in the view of the Caffers, that the cattle-field is always used as the place of public meetings and resort. Cattle constitute the currency in a great degree. Brides also are bought and sold for so many bullocks,—the proprietor in conversation frequently classing his wife and his pack-ox together, and estimating his property according to the joint amount of his herd and his daughters. Indeed, says our latest authority, ‘his conduct towards his cattle is generally of a much more feeling character, than that which he sometimes evinces towards the partner of his bosom.’* Even crimes are paid for in cattle. In one instance a party of villagers, having been pilfered by their neighbors, and having complained of it without obtaining restitution, took justice into their own hands, and commenced an affray which resulted in the slaughter of three of the trespassers. The matter was then brought before the chief, who affected to weep for the loss of his warriors. No sooner, however, had he obtained one half the herd belonging to the assailants, than he not only suspended his lamentations, but declared that all they had done was ‘very good.’† Travelling, in the Cape Colony, is also performed by the Europeans mostly with the aid of oxen,—not less than four or five pairs being customarily attached to the unwieldy and lumbering wagons of the country,—and this practice again, as well as the price which the hides of the animals will bring in the civilized market, where one is at hand, adds to the commercial value of the herd. Even the amusements of these people are derived from the same source.

* *Researches*, p. 128.† *Ibid*, p. 140.

Racing young cattle is a favorite sport ; and a part of the herd are trained to run at an astonishing rate, the oddity, if not beauty, of the appearance of this singular procession being doubtless not a little augmented by the Caffer custom of twisting the horns of the animals, while they are yet flexible, into all sorts of fantastical shapes. In a word, the ox is to the Caffer what the horse is to the Bedouin, or the deer to the Laplander,—shelter, vesture, carrier, family and food.

As might be expected, the principal aliment of these tribes is *milk*, which they use, like the Arabs, in a sour, curdled state ; next to this article, boiled corn, (Indian)—for they cultivate, after a fashion, considerable tracts of fertile land ; and more generally, a species of millet, also pumpkins, a kind of sugar-cane, gourds, fruits, and a few esculent roots of minor importance. The use of animal food is rare. Veal is objectionable in an economical view,—on the same principle, (according to Mr. Kay's apparent ideas of the Caffer theory,) which would render it bad policy for a man to eat his daughter or ' the partner of his bosom.' Swine's flesh,—it is remarkable,—is rejected by the Caffers with abhorrence. The same is the case with the feathered tribe to some extent ; none of them keep poultry of any sort ; and eggs, as an article of food, are altogether contraband. Nay, these scrupulous gentry will have nothing to do with the fish of the sea, which they for the most part regard as company only for snakes, and no more fit to be the food of a gentleman. So that, although these people live almost wholly on or near the coast, the entire line of which abounds with the choicest fish, they are ignorant even of the art of casting a net.

Neither will they eat elephant's flesh on any occasion, or even undertake, like the Hindoos, to domesticate that animal. This is the more remarkable, since he is always regarded as favorite game, and the passage of a herd in the neighborhood of a hamlet is the signal for a general hue and cry. The explanation given to Mr. Kay,—whether *bona fide* or not, we cannot decide,—was, that the elephant is too sagacious, too much like man himself, to be used for food. Their respect for him appears, at all events, from their hunting habits. They approach him from behind, so as to elude the glance of his eye, and when thus engaged in killing him, it is not a little amusing, says our informant, to hear them lauding the animal, and crying, '*Don't kill us, great captain, don't*

tread upon us, mighty chief,'—plying him lustily meanwhile with their spears, and raising a tremendous shout the instant the animal falls. The tusks are the prize sought for. One of them falls to the lot of him who first pierces the game with his weapon, and the other to the chief of the party.

The Caffer does not however subsist wholly on vegetable food. The issue of the very elephant hunts just described, is usually celebrated by the feasting of the whole company upon an ox, which the successful hunter must furnish: and on other occasions a rhinoceros is despatched and devoured with as much *goût*, and as little ceremony or cookery, as if he were no better or bigger than a cabbage-head. 'Plain animal food, without salt, seasoning, or vegetable, is the greatest luxury the Caffer desires, and whenever any one kills a cow, it is an invariable custom throughout the country for all around to flock to the feast.'* Even this custom, however, rather indicates the infrequency of the use of such food, and on the whole it may doubtless be asserted safely, that it enters in a very small proportion into their regular subsistence. They are substantially a milk-fed nation; and if the physiologists, philosophers, or physicians have any theories to form or confirm in respect to the influence of such aliment on the character of the people with whom it prevails, they will probably find few cases where the data are more conveniently set before them.

We may properly take this occasion to remark, without discussing a question which we are not prepared to decide, that, whatever the cause may be, the Caffers are generally admitted to be favorably distinguished from most barbarous nations by their mildness of disposition,—a position, which is not much contradicted by the existence of many harsh and cruel customs among them, rather appertinent to condition than character, and chiefly the immediate result of excessive superstition. Not only Mr. Kay, but travellers generally, and especially missionaries, when known to be such, have always been treated with signal civility. 'The treatment we met with from the natives on this journey,' says the former, 'was far better than we had anticipated, *as the clans living along the base of the mountain are celebrated thieves and robbers.*'† Again,—'their habits of life induce a firmness of carriage, and an open manly demeanor, altogether free from that apparent

* P. 97.

† P. 101.

fear and suspicion, characteristic of uncivilized nations.'* In another instance he describes the commencement of a mission among the Amatembu, under the charge of himself and another clergyman. The inhabitants received them, at the first villages, 'rather coolly,' although the chief had granted them permission to make the attempt; but on learning who the strangers were, we are told they assumed an entirely different character. They kindled their fires for them, and, having finished their day's labor among the herds, assembled for divine service, and listened attentively to a hymn and a sermon from the missionaries,—'perfect silence reigning in the desert around, and the moon shining delightfully bright above, while they led this sable group to the contemplation of divine things.' After the services, the chief gave them a fat cow for slaughter, —'for which, however, he expected an equivalent, *such reciprocity of friendly tokens being the customary mode of forming attachments.*'

This estimate of the Caffer character is confirmed by Barrow, Lichenstein, Alberti, General Janssens, and other travellers. Vasco de Gama originally named them *boā gente*,—'good people;' and, to come nearer home for authority, we have the testimony of the American Captain Stout, of the ship *Hercules*, who, in his narrative of the shipwreck of his vessel on this coast some twenty years since, acknowledges that he found in the natives a hospitality, and received from them a protection, which on many of the shores of the polished nations of Europe he might have looked for in vain. 'They made a fire to dry us, slaughtered a bullock, conducted us to a spring of water, &c. Such was the conduct of a people described as possessing no other semblance of the human character, than what they derive from their formation.'† The reputation of the Caffers, for what this gentleman calls 'the compassionate feelings which adorn humanity,' may, on the whole, be considered as sufficiently established.

Their reputation for honesty does not perhaps rest on so good a foundation. In 1828, when Mr. Kay visited Gaika, a cele-

* P. 247.

† This narrative is cited in an article in the *London Quarterly Review* for 1820, the writer of which states that he saw with his own eyes the wreck of the Captain's vessel on the shore mentioned in the narrative.

brated and principal chief, with the view of obtaining permission to establish a missionary station in his country, (in which he succeeded) one of that potentate's wives contrived to steal a silk handkerchief from the pocket of a gentleman in the company, while he was engaged in negotiation with the husband. Whether the latter acted as accessary in the business does not appear: the missionary remarks only, that this 'royal mendicant,' whom he describes otherwise as 'a sordid, avaricious, and beggarly wretch,' was in the mean time endeavoring to extort additional presents from *him* by complaining of his niggardliness, in regard to what he had already bestowed. This kind of gratitude might certainly be considered,—as Captain Church says of four and sixpence a day, premium for an Indian's head,—'scanty encouragement and poor reward.' But however this might be, no doubt King Gaika and his wife, had they read Dr. Combe's 'System,' would at least dignify their accumulative propensity, if they could not deny it, by reference to the example set forth by that illustrious King of the Sicilies, who is reported to have been so inveterate a pickpocket, that he laid hands upon every portable article of value which came in his way.

His majesty, whose character is pourtrayed in the flattering terms borrowed above from Mr. Kay, by no means stands so preëminent in the fashionable accomplishment alluded to, as his station, and the value of his example, might seem to require. When our traveller went into Cafferland a second time, during the year last named, on the same errand as before, he gives a graphic description of an interview with the natives, which took place under the spreading branches of a thorn-tree, on the banks of a solitary stream. The news of his arrival collected great crowds of visitors the next morning; and 'their deportment was indeed friendly,' says Mr. Kay, 'but circumstances soon convinced us, that they would consider it no evil to pick and steal whenever opportunity enabled them to do so.' It is remarkable that a remedy was found in this instance by hiring one of the depredators, for the consideration of a few beads, to guard the exposed property of the tent. This he did to the perfect satisfaction of his employers, and the missionary embraces with evident pleasure this occasion of stating, as an offset to the vice before charged upon the Caffer, that *he never knew a single instance of his betraying his trust in any thing which was fairly and fully committed to his*

charge. 'Do this,' he adds, 'and the utmost confidence may in general be placed in him.'

Dr. Combe would perhaps consider this apparent inconsistency the result of a ruling propensity being counteracted by setting in operation an opposite motive. Whether the stealing disposition is constitutional or casual, it would be presumptuous in us to endeavor to decide, when doctors disagree. It may however be remarked, that the habit in question is to some extent an almost universal trait of savage character. If the Caffer carries it farther than some others, by stealing, whenever he can conveniently, as Mr. Kay somewhere states, from even his best friends of his own tribe, and by inculcating this Spartan doctrine systematically, in early life, upon the minds of his children, perhaps this preëminence may be fairly attributed in a great measure to the nature of the intercourse he has held for a century and a half with his profligate European neighbors, and especially to the depredations and other injuries he has suffered at their hands. Unprincipled war has degenerated into rapine on a smaller scale, rapine into robbery, robbery into larceny, and the habit thus acquired, particularly if deemed honorable, could not fail of being finally exercised with considerably less discrimination as to subjects, than might have been the *honest* intention in the outset. The African tribes generally, it may be noticed, have credit among travellers for no small share of this disordered acquisitiveness, and it is no where so rife as with those nations which have suffered most from the slave-trade. Crime, like disease, is contagious.

The government of the Caffers resembles that of the North American natives, and indeed that of most of the African tribes. It is ostensibly democratic, and substantially despotic, respectively in the highest degree; the personal superiority of the chiefs, and the advantage they derive from traditional authority, being for the most part sufficient to enable them to treat their subjects with the most unqualified, though only customary, severity of discipline or imposition, as the case may be. By personal superiority, we mean simply such qualifications as create personal influence among such barbarians as the Caffers. The principal ones are energy and cunning. Such must have been the recommendations of his majesty, the 'beggarly wretch,' above described. It is stated also of another, named S'Lhambi, who visited Wesleyville with a train of thirty or forty counsellors,—persons corresponding to the same class

among our natives,—that notwithstanding his advanced age, ‘lust, avarice and lying were by far the most prominent traits of his character;’ a description which recalls to mind the accounts given by American historians of the celebrated Uncas. Yet the reverence evinced for this exemplary character by his attendants, was unbounded. Hinza was another great man among the Caffers, and the dignity of this worthy may be inferred from the circumstance, that while his slaves were literally trembling in his presence, ‘lest he should cast envious eyes on their earnings,’ he attempted to extort a basket of corn from Mr. Kay, by ingeniously contracting his body in such a manner as to represent the effects of a severe famine. How far the advice of the counsellors aforesaid, and the custom of conducting trials and councils in the palaver-houses (that is, the cattle-fold) contribute to check his absolute authority, may be easily conjectured, when it is understood that ‘the chiefs are, in all cases,’ as Thompson remarks, ‘both legislators and judges;’ and that, in the language of Mr. Kay, although Hinza would not seize the property of his subjects with force and arms, yet ‘*such is his power and their thralldom, that whatever he might request they would scarcely dare to refuse.*’

The degradation of the female sex is considered by Dr. Robertson the characteristic of the savage in all countries. If the degree of it fairly indicate that of the grossness of his barbarism, the Caffers must be low indeed in the human scale. No where are women, as such, such perfect slaves; no where are they so much used as mere chattels. Even the building devolves on them, as well as the digging, sowing, planting and reaping. The common price of a *bride* is from five to ten head of cattle, though one of high birth, as the term is,—much as in civilized countries we speak of the descendant of a famous horse,—will bring five or six times that amount. After marriage comes endless drudgery, till the woman is fortunate enough either to be worn out with her slavery, or to be left a widow. Indeed, the tyranny of custom follows her even beyond that of her husband, for not only is she compelled, on his decease, to retire alone into the wilderness for a considerable time, under pretext of mourning,—whatever the season or her condition may be,—but, the only dowry allotted her from his property being a new garment from the hide of one of his oxen, she thenceforth ‘sinks under an intol-

erable burthen of drudgery, and is constantly constrained to be the servant of sin.*

The wives of the king,—for polygamy is universal,—do not appear to be exempted from these or any other of the sufferings of other women. When the above-mentioned S'Lhambi died, all the apparel of his ten wives was burned, and all their ornaments given away, and they then entered the forest comparatively naked. Even the husband's hut is destroyed, so that the first care of the widow, on her return, must be to erect a new one, as usual, with her own hands. That the Caffer women, under all these circumstances, are able to maintain a reputation rather superior to that of savages generally, for vivacity of manners, is a marvel worthy of study. The triumph of nature, however, over man, does not last through life. Even the personal beauty of the young is here, as among the Western Africans described by Major Laing, pretty soon changed into even 'disgusting ugliness.'

If now, in connexion with the view which has been given, imperfect as it is, of the traits of the Caffers, we take into consideration certain circumstances of their geographical situation and condition, which have but an indirect bearing upon the former, we shall be prepared for forming some opinion on the prospect of success, which a teacher of European arts and religion might safely entertain among such a people, and of course on the degree of success which actually has been and probably may be ultimately attained by such laborers.

Being, as we have seen, emphatically a grazing people, they must regard primarily the thrift of their herds and flocks, rather than personal comfort, social enjoyment, or an attachment to particular situations. Water and pasturage are requisites of the first degree, and these are matters not to be calculated upon in South Africa, as they are in Vermont. The whole face of the landscape may change from month to month. Stream-lets, for instance, which are indispensable to the herdsman, are often lost, either by evaporation during severe droughts, or by absorption in a sandy soil. Such failure might trouble our grazers, but the Caffer has only to remove, with his family and herds, to another station, where the elements are more propitious. There he can erect his hut and his fold in a few days.

* *Researches.*

It is easy to see the difficulty of civilizing people who live in this manner; and, on the other hand, the difficulty of changing their mode of life, so far as even their occupation is concerned, is substantially the labor of civilization itself, for it implies the adoption of agricultural habits and of a fixed residence. Mr. Kay takes this view of the subject, when he says,—‘one great object of our missionary labors is, to turn his attention more fully to agricultural pursuits, and to *attach him to the soil*, that he may be made fully acquainted with the arts of civilized life.’ At present he is attached to nothing but his herds.

All savages are more or less belligerent, and perhaps the South Africans, though less bloodthirsty than many other nations, are as much as any in this respect the victims of custom and circumstances. Their neighbors on all sides are barbarous like themselves, valuing their cattle as dearly, and as ready to fight for them, in defence or in depredation,—excepting only the frontier population of the European colony. The character of this frontier population may be known from its name. It is bad enough every where,—enough effectually to prevent the civilization of any conterminous people,—but here, the very *beau idéal* of bastard barbarism. The Caffers and the Dutch boors,—the latter extremely ignorant and rude, remote from the supervision of even the colonial government, and living in the most scattered manner conceivable,—have always been tugging at each others’ throats. Unquestionably the first aggressions, and those extremely violent, were on the part of the whites; but this would be a comparatively unimportant question to settle, were we able to say that in later times the case had been essentially improved. Unfortunately, the English, although only thirty years in possession of the colony, have during that short period outstripped, in their horrible oppression of the natives, even the cold-blooded cruelties of the Dutch boors of the last century. No British traveller has denied this, so far as we know, and most of them confirm it in explicit terms. Among these may be named Thompson, Barrow, Pringle, and quite lately Dr. Phillip, as well as the author before us. Lieutenant Rose, in his *Four Years in South Africa*, states that official orders have been issued, ‘that all Caffers appearing within the proclaimed line should be *shot*.’ Again,—‘the crime was individual, but the punishment general; the duty of the commanders was to destroy, to

burn the habitations, and to seize the cattle ; and they did their duty.' ' I hate the policy that turns the English soldier *into the cold-blooded butcher of the unresisting native,*' &c. Such, as a writer in the last Edinburgh Review remarks, is the testimony of an officer for some time stationed on the Caffer frontier, and officially cognizant of the transactions he thus describes. Some of these atrocities, adds the Reviewer himself,—rather wantonly travelling from the record,—‘ rival any thing we have read of the conduct of certain States of North America towards the native Indians !’

The details which these strong statements are based on, might be easily furnished, but the task would be as unnecessary as disgusting ; and enough has already been said to indicate, as we intended, the extremely disheartening circumstances, so far as first impressions and prepossessions go, under which it may reasonably be supposed that any European, and, not least, any English missionary, must enter upon the work of civilizing and christianizing the Caffers. Some striking evidences of the feelings of the latter in reference to this point, occur in the volume before us. They will be readily conjectured by those who recall the history of the early intercourse between the settlers of this country and the Red Men, or, indeed, of that which has gone on in our own times between the latter and the ‘Regulators’ of the back woods.

The excessive ignorance of these people may be well considered another obstacle, of no trifling importance, in the way of even their instruction. In most of the Oriental countries, as Mr. Kay remarks, there is more or less of a literature. In the northern regions of Africa, and in the central, Mohammedanism has kept up at least an acquaintance with a written language. Native translators may be obtained in each instance. But the Caffers had never heard of a written character previously to the arrival of Europeans in their vicinity, and to this day their knowledge is simply traditionary, and without record of religion, history, or law. Let our missionary speak for himself:

‘ A missionary sits down with his interpreter, who cannot read a single line of the Word of God in any language ; and perhaps his knowledge of divine things is very imperfect, and some of his notions erroneous. He opens the sacred volume, and has to translate that, in the first instance, into barbarous Dutch, that his interpreter may comprehend its meaning ; and

then his interpreter tells him how that barbarous Dutch ought to be worded in the Caffer language. And thus, every verse being a double translation, not only is the progress exceedingly slow, but, it may be, in several instances, after all care and caution have been employed, the genuine sense is not given, or in only a very imperfect manner. With this translation the missionary stands up to read a portion of the Word of God ; for his interpreter cannot read it ; and here a defect in the pronunciation of words, entirely dissimilar in their sound to any in his own language, occasions a further deterioration of his labors ; so that, after all, only some parts of what he has accomplished are understood by the people.'

Whether the religious ignorance of the Caffer is on the whole a greater obstacle to the introduction of Christianity than a definite and time-hallowed system of superstition would be, we much doubt ; but it is at all events discouragement enough. S'Lhambi was not far from reasonable, when he told Mr. Kay, on the occasion of a visit which has already been mentioned, after hearing his proposals, that however good his intentions were, he doubted if *his* people were not rather too bad to learn. 'What teacher,' he asked, 'will come to live among them?' This being satisfactorily answered, 'Where,' exclaimed he, 'does that man, God, live?'—a question which we are told is often put by the Caffer, and in a manner which shows both his ignorance and his skepticism.

Nor ought an opinion to be formed on the prospects of civilization in this quarter of the globe, or elsewhere, without some reference to the personal hardships which must be undergone by those who act as its almoners. These are likely to be, in any case of the kind, severe enough to try both the physical and mental powers of endurance and perseverance which most men possess, independently of the obstacles heretofore referred to ; but in South Africa they are aggravated by the peculiar character of the country as well as of the people. The latter are so ignorant, improvident, destitute and filthy, that when the missionary is among them, whatever is done for his personal comfort, even the building of his hut, must be done with his own hands ; and perhaps, by the time his shelter is fairly set up, his congregation will be migrating to another district, leaving him to shift for himself again. Then, the population is so scattered, and so much of the territory between the settlements a scarcely traversable desert

as to add still further to the difficulties of communication,—not to make mention of the hazard of encountering belligerent tribes or marauding parties, or an abundance, such as scarcely any other region of the world produces, of highly dangerous reptiles and beasts of prey. A few random passages from our missionary's travelling sketches will set this matter in its true light.

The very first day when his party left Graham's Town for the interior, his path was 'an exceedingly solitary one, leading through a bushy part of the country, infested by wild beasts, and traversed by wandering marauders,'—and they were obliged to ride till ten at night, before they could have the satisfaction of resting their aching bones on 'a hard wooden couch, with nothing over it but a wild beast's skin.' Their first consolation in the morning was the view of a group of graves, which marked the spot where a number of their countrymen had been 'horridly massacred by the natives a few years before.' On another occasion the fare was comparatively luxurious :

'Being both hungry and thirsty, we stopped at one of the hamlets in our way, and with five or six buttons procured a basket or two of sour milk, which furnished us with a refreshing meal. Just as the sun disappeared we came to a fine fountain, and there halted. As usual, the grass was our bed, and the saddles our pillows, while the spreading branches of a large tree served, in some degree, to shelter us from the chilling dews of night. Being now in an unoccupied part of the country, our fires were kept burning, as well for protection as comfort ; and our repose was undisturbed, excepting by the shrill screams of the jackal, which occasionally awoke us.'

To make up, however, for this extraordinary comfort, the next morning, upon starting afresh on horseback, the traveller was thrown senseless over the yawning mouth of a deep pit, which had been dug and concealed for wild beasts. It is not uncommon for both horse and rider to be killed in this way.

Another situation equally desirable is alluded to in the following extract, some previous mention having been made of herds of elephants.

'While we were ascending the eastern bank, one of these huge creatures raised the most hideous shriek I ever heard ; the sound vibrated in the surrounding glens for several seconds. The animal was evidently right in front of us ; and, judging from his horrid note, could not be many paces distant. On hear-

ing it, our horses made a dead halt ; and how to act we knew not, the night being so dark that we could scarcely see each other, much less the beast before us. Our road led up a narrow neck of land, on each side of which were deep kloofs and tremendous precipices ; hence, to turn off either to the right hand or to the left was impossible with any degree of safety, and to go back we were not at all willing. After pausing, therefore, for a few minutes, we gave a hearty shout, and then proceeded.'

How much of a luxury even a friendly entertainment is among those people, may be learned from S'Lhambi's distinguished hospitality.

'For our accommodation was set apart a shattered hut, in which it was impossible to stand upright; and which every heavy blast threatened to carry completely away. Herein we slept, with our interpreters and guides, &c., on each side of us; nor were they all; for as the entrance was entirely open, there being no door, we sometimes found, on waking, that a company of half-starved dogs had quietly crept in, and taken lodgings in the midst of us. "That you may not perish of hunger near my dwelling," said the chief, "here is an old cow for you to eat." This, with the economy of civilized life, would, of course, have constituted ample provision for many days; but the moment the poor animal's doom was sealed, a multitude of mouths, human, canine, and vulturine, seemed instinctively to open and prepare for devouring her. It not unfrequently happens that every bone is picked, and every edible morsel consumed, in the course of five or six hours after the beast is killed. Even while the slaughter is going on, each helper considers himself entitled to the privilege of cutting off "titbits;" which, while quivering with life, he throws upon the fire, and devours without much ceremony. When the whole has been eviscerated and dissected, all around expect a portion; and hosts of dogs, which accompany their owners to the feast, pick and steal on every side.'

Again:

'The weather being hazy and wet, we were all obliged to crowd together in an old filthy hovel, that was neither wind nor water-proof; and the perpetual stew of broiling meat rendered our situation still more disagreeable. This to them is the most delightful way of spending a rainy day,—cooking, eating, and sleeping. When thus impeded in our peregrinations, the day may be profitably spent in reading, conversing with the people, or in observations upon the surrounding objects; but to be cooped up in a Caffer hut during a long winter's evening is miserable indeed.

As soon as the sun disappears, a fire is kindled in the centre of the floor : in the roof there is no chimney nor aperture (unless, indeed, the building happens to be in a dilapidated state), whereby the smoke may escape ; consequently a reeky cloud soon fills the room ; to read is almost impossible, the fire not affording sufficient light, and lamps or candles are here unknown.'

The night following the day here referred to was spent by the travellers under the shelter of a hedge,—that situation being preferred, though the weather was 'piercingly cold,' to the accommodations mentioned above. But at length the journey was finished, the object of it effected, and a regular shelter raised for the party. Alas !

'To keep ourselves dry either by night or by day was almost impossible : so that our situation was any thing but comfortable ; and severe colds were the unavoidable consequence.'

In another case,

'On asking for a hut to sleep in, I was informed that one was all he had ; but that, if we thought proper, we were at liberty to occupy a small half-built shed among the shrubbery hard by, which was appropriated to the use of his servants. This consisted merely of a few live twigs bent at the tops, and interwoven so as to form a frame, which was loosely covered with long grass and branches. It was by no means the most pleasant or desirable situation to lie down in, as the high weeds and thick underwood that surrounded it were evidently a nest for serpents and other vermin.'

In this opinion most of our readers will doubtless concur, though it happens to be on this same page that the traveller expresses his acknowledgments, as above stated, for the unexpected good treatment he met with on this route, as the people he travelled among, were for the most part a banditti of notorious thieves and scoundrels,—a kind of society which must have greatly enhanced the comforts of the situation described in the extract. Colonel Hamilton was much less grateful for the privilege allowed him, as he says, of sleeping over night, at one of our country taverns, in what he supposed to be a dog-hole, which was graciously given up, for his especial accommodation, by the negro who blacked his boots.

Once more :

'The night was exceedingly cold, which rendered me glad to take refuge in one of their huts, although by no means a very

pleasant bed-chamber. Its diameter was about ten feet, and besides myself, companion, and a dog or two, there were no less than eight Caffers laid in different positions on the floor. At our feet, and in the centre, we had a good large fire, which was kept burning during the whole of the night. Had there been no other company, the place would have been tolerable; but, to say nothing of swarms of mice, vermin of various descriptions ever and anon disturbed our slumbers, and made us frequently long for morning.'

The impatience of the reverend gentleman, under all these circumstances, was in our opinion quite excusable. Fortunately he was aroused early in the morning by 'sounds of a very doleful kind,' which were found to proceed from a company of natives engaged in performing the orgies customarily used,—as a medicine, we presume,—for certain cases of disease. We need only add, that to form a just conception of the delights of these Caffer sleeping-rooms, the reader must generally imagine the savory accompaniment of a party of inveterate smokers of a filthy species of wild hemp, who, in the absence of regular pipes, are in the habit of using water-melons and horns to answer the same purpose.

The question may now properly be discussed, what has been done, and what may be done hereafter,—and how,—for the promulgation of European civilization and the Christian religion in regions like these? If any tolerable degree of success has been or can be attained under circumstances, of which at least the aspect to a casual observer is thus discouraging, it would seem somewhat difficult to substantiate the correctness of that theory, which denies to any portion of the human race, in any condition, a competency for the important enjoyments and improvements of refined society.

After all, there are redeeming traits in almost all characters and situations; and it must be admitted that, reasoning *a priori*, those of the Caffer, even as they have been described, are by no means so forbidding as might be imagined. Though a wandering and warlike people,—hideously savage in some of their domestic habits,—abjectly submissive to the impositions of both chiefs and priests, whose interest it is, of course, to keep them where they are,—exasperated, by long-continued injuries, against all white men, and as rudely ignorant as perhaps even the New Hollanders themselves,—on the other hand, as we have seen, instead of being, like the North

American natives, solitary, suspicious, proud and implacable, they are kind and docile, and as ready to forgive an injury as to resent one. If their volatility and their volubility, which are strong characteristics of most of the native Africans, be sometimes provoking, as the missionaries represent, they are far less discouraging qualities, especially in regard to the temperament they indicate, than either the apathy of some savages or the coarse cruelty of others.

There are at this time a number of mission stations in different parts of Cafferland, supported, we believe, by five or six different denominations of English Christians. On all these stations, says Mr. Kay, '*the plough is busily engaged, and bids fair for ultimately putting down the field-labor of women altogether.*' This remark intimates what appears to us a rational and practical view of the whole ground of the civilizing process, from which the happiest results may be expected to arise. We agree with this writer, that from settlements of civilized people, established near or even among these or any other barbarians, under whatever circumstances of inter-communication, but upon merely civil principles, and without any general, public, explicit, and carefully supported recognition of the Christian religion in some form or another, no permanent good can be expected to result to either of the parties. Such experiments have been abundantly tried, and found wanting. But, on the other hand, any attempts to introduce for the first time this religion among savages, under existing circumstances, alone,—attempts to introduce the theory and formality of religion, without the substantial applications and connexions which make it the vital spirit of civilized life,—and without such applications adapted also to the condition of the people and country who are expected to receive it and retain it,—are, and have been proved to be, no better than attempts to transplant the trunks of trees without some portion at least of the roots. The Christian religion is designed for man as he is found on the face of the earth, and not for the abstract being in an abstract state; and wheresoever it is to be promulgated anew in these days, by the agency of men, among men, nothing can be vainer than to expect it to thrive, or even live, in a soil, or rather an atmosphere, of words and creeds alone. It is neither an air-plant, nor a water-plant; nor a flower to spring, like the almond blossom, from leafless branches. Its radix must be buried deep in the daily affections and thoughts, and must fasten its living fibres in them all.

There is a good sense, then, to our mind, in the incidental allusion last cited, which is ominous of good results. Again,—‘ Having planted *a few twigs of the mulberry, together with various other fruit trees*, at Mount Coke, in 1828, I now found them flourishing luxuriantly ; as also at Wesleyville, where both soil and climate seem to suit them well.’ Mr. Kay trusts, therefore,—and so do we,—that in process of time the silk-worm will be introduced, and constitute a profitable source of employment for the natives. Will any one ask, what has the mulberry, and what has money-making, to do with the Christian religion ? Every thing has to do with it in a case like this,—every thing not intrinsically exceptionable,—which makes its reception more easy, its retention more sure,—every thing, of course, which makes the nomade more stationary, the warrior peaceable, the savage a farmer, the enemy a friend. The more of these physical and practical associations the better. They are not indeed the trunk of the tree, but, as we said before, its soil, and humanly speaking, its support. Let this be but well-chosen and well-cultured, and the faithful and intelligent missionary may, not without cheerful confidence in the usual operation of industrious effort and stirring inducement, labor and pray, like the husbandman who is not above the practical prosecution of his business, for the crowning sunbeams and dews of divine favor upon his work.

Hence we are not surprised to find Mr. Kay subjoining to the statements just quoted, that ‘ *schools have been every where established* ;’ and that, ‘ notwithstanding the numerous difficulties arising out of a total want of books, from manuscript lessons alone many of the children have acquired a knowledge of letters.’ On this continent, as well as elsewhere, it has been but too often and too vainly attempted either to civilize without Christianity, or to christianize without civilizing : and some sciolists have mooted the question for centuries, substantially, which of these methods is to be preferred, while it has not apparently occurred to them that religion can as ill do without reason as reason without religion ; and that both are, in this world, under divine appointment, as indissolubly indispensable to the vitality and prosperity of civilized and christian society, as the soul and body of man to his individual existence.

Excellent judgment has been also recently shown to advantage, in the case of the Caffers, by the colonial government, in the establishment of a systematic commercial intercourse

between them and the Europeans, which requires only a strict supervision to render it productive of much benefit to the former, and especially by affording them opportunities of witnessing the comforts of civilized life in their best aspect, and by inducing them, in view thereof, and of the profits of the commerce we refer to, to adopt industrious, frugal, and regular habits and modes of life. From 1824 to 1829, the amount of native produce brought into the colony, to the fairs, was rated at £50,000, at least. A Cape paper of April, 1832, estimates that brought into Graham's Town alone, at from £500 to £700, weekly, for several months then last past. This importation is composed mostly of ivory, hides, horns, and sambocs, or whips made of the hide of the rhinoceros and hippopotamus. Those portions of this trade, of which the materials are supplied by wild animals, must diminish, and probably disappear altogether, at some future day; but, so far as the cause of civilization is concerned, this can hardly be a subject of regret. The benefits, which ought to result from the trade meanwhile, so long as it lasts, are not so likely to be lost, even though it should not give place to a source of pecuniary profit, more consistent with and more conducive to an agricultural subsistence.

A publication cited by our author, under the title of the Cape Directory, bears testimony to the decreased amount of Caffer depredations on colonial cattle, to the entire cessation of murders by the same people within the boundary, and to the fearless impunity with which the frontier settlers now expose themselves unarmed in the most retired jungles of the country;—all attributed to this new direction given to the Caffer capability, by the creation of the new market. Individuals of approved character have been licensed also to pass the boundary, and trade with the natives out of their own hamlets; and at one of the missionary stations is a shop, which, as Mr. Kay states, has been of great benefit in supplying the surrounding clans with English apparel,—and that is becoming fashionable,—iron cooking-pots, knives, hatchets, agricultural implements, and other useful articles, at moderate prices, and in a manner best adapted to the circumstances of the purchasers.

In another quarter, an extensive and very desirable communication has been opened between the colony and Port Natal, across the Caffer territory, by the traders making a direct road, over what has been hitherto an impassable country, with the aid of about a hundred of the natives. Some

of the best English families have settled themselves in the midst of these people, and of these not a few are making themselves essentially serviceable in their instruction of the Caffers around them. One young man is mentioned, (as having settled among Pato's tribe,) who manages a Sunday school of fifty children. British coin, now the colonial currency, has been introduced to a considerable extent among the natives. These measures, and especially the conduct of the missionaries, have had an astonishing effect in removing or reducing the ancient prejudices of this people against the whites.

A similar account is given, for example, of the voluntary visit of Dushani, a powerful chief, who went to Graham's Town with Mr. Kay, to make restitution for certain trespasses of his subjects :

'The day after their arrival, they were introduced to Lieutenant-colonel Somerset, the commandant, who kindly ordered all necessary attention to be paid to their wishes and wants during their stay. The day following, being Sabbath, they attended divine service in our chapel, and conducted themselves with marked propriety. The appearance of the congregation, the order of the service, and the solemnity of the occasion evidently impressed them much, as they had never before witnessed any thing of the kind. After minutely examining almost every corner of the place, Dushani, with manifest astonishment, exclaimed, "And is it possible to build such a house for God in our land?" After spending about a week in town, they became anxious respecting home ; and as I was not ready to return, the commandant furnished them with a military escort, lest any harm should befall them on the way. During their stay, they were treated with unexpected kindness by the British colonists generally ; received numerous presents, and returned highly satisfied with their visit.'

Again,—speaking of Morley, a late and remote settlement, which has been joined already by a neighboring chieftain, with all his hamlet, whose residence is now within a few minutes walk of the mission-house,—

'Among those who were employed in various kinds of work on the mission premises, one old man was pointed out to me, whose history is highly interesting. He heard from afar, that the *Abafundis* (missionaries) were men of peace, and that these men of peace were come into the land. This intelligence excited in his mind "a burning desire to see them ;" and although he knew not which way to proceed, he set off in search, and

determined if possible to find them. For food on their journey, both he and his family were entirely dependent upon the spontaneous supplies of nature; bulbous roots and earth-nuts constituting their only means of subsistence. Cattle they had none, nor were they able to procure any. Having to travel through an enemy's country, he had frequently to flee for his life; so that his family was at length completely dispersed, and he lost the whole of his children (five) one by one. Thus distressing was the situation of this solitary wanderer in the desert, without any earthly prospect whatever, and bereft of the only solace he had. He nevertheless persevered in his main design, earnestly inquiring as he went along, if any one knew "where the men of peace dwelt?" After travelling until almost worn out, and ready to faint, he finally reached the station; and there his peregrinations ended.'

Not to enter farther into detail, and passing over wholly the corresponding accounts given of the Hottentots, it must be admitted that these statements,—the correctness of which is confirmed by an abundance of impartial testimony,—are, on the whole, highly encouraging to the advocates of an enlightened practical system of African Colonization, in reference to its effect on the natives. If the same exertion shall be made, with the same discretion, by our American settlers, and the missionaries among them, we see no good reason for doubting their success on the Western Coast, where there are several circumstances which must operate in their favor, that have been wanting in the Southern experiment. Colonies have always been the conductors of civilization the world over, and although they have sometimes, perhaps generally, in past ages,—as, for example, in the settlement of most parts of our country,—been made the occasion of little use and of great abuse to the natives, as well as vast ulterior benefit at large, it would seem wonderful indeed if all this experimental knowledge, which history furnishes, of good and evil, and right and wrong, in the matters of colonial economy and polity, should be lost to the reason, philanthropy and justice of a day like this in which we live. One thing is certain, at least,—that, at no period of time, has any portion of the earth's surface presented a fairer field, than Western Africa now does, for the trial of the old system upon new principles; and never had any people, on the other hand, either stronger motives or better means than ourselves, for the prosecution of such a trial to a vigorous maturity and a glorious close.